

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING THE LIVES OF FREDA JONES AND OFFICER CLARK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, just a week ago last Saturday I visited with the family of a young woman who may not have been known in our community in Houston, Texas, maybe a few weeks ago. Just a young mother with two wonderful children, one a 3-month-old daughter and one a 10-year-old son, hard working, trying to provide for them. Her life became intimately intertwined with our departed and dear friend, Officer Clark.

For just about 10 days ago, Houston Police Officer Clark lost his life in a heroic attempt to save Freda Jones's life in a horrible and brutal robbery in our community.

Just this past week we buried Officer Clark, and I paid tribute to him, although I was not able to attend his going-home service because of business here in Washington. But through my office we shared with his wonderful family how much we appreciated his bravery and his service, how much we appreciated his love for his community, the fact that he was a consummate police officer.

Now, within 24 hours we will bury Freda Jones, who, listening to her family both Saturday and Sunday at a prayer vigil for her, I have come to understand her as a wonderful young woman, someone who simply wanted to provide for her family in working in the job she was working, innocently opening the office of a check cashing office by herself, taking up the responsibilities of another employee because that employee had been injured in a car accident. She was always a willing person, as we understand. She was a person who loved her family. She was, likewise, a person who brought the family together. She was certainly like your neighbor.

And so I would like to say to the Jones family, all of her brothers and sisters, her mother and father, her mother and father lost another child to brutality or brutal act of murder just a few years ago. And now they lost a cherished daughter to a brutal robbery, an unnecessary, callous act of murder. And all of the perpetrators should be brought to justice because they took the life of a young woman who simply wanted to raise her children to make a decent living in this Nation.

So I think it is appropriate that as we honor so many heroes, we are so grateful for the young men and women who serve us in the United States military.

I had the opportunity to visit some of our injured soldiers at Bethesda Hos-

pital this morning. We are grateful for them. We pray for their families. We pray for the families of MIAs. We pray for the families of the POWs. We pray for the families of those who lost their lives. And every day in America there are heroes as well. Because Freda Jones lost her life by trying to fend off these robbers by calling the police. And I imagine in the act of calling the police, her life was taken. And then Officer Clark who responded, or was responding, had his life taken.

What a terrible testimony to the freedom of America. But we will keep pressing forward honoring heroes, local heroes like Freda Jones and Officer Clark. And to the Houston community, I offer my deepest sympathy to the family that will mourn tomorrow as she will be laid to rest. I say to you that you have at least had a wonderful time in her life and as well the wonderful memories; and, yes, you have her two beautiful children and this wonderful extended family.

I hope that you, the Jones family and the Clark family, will find strength in each other. You are forever bonded together. And I hope you will know that the Houston community, the 18th Congressional District appreciates so much that you lived, but also that your life tragically was sacrificed but it will not ever be forgotten. We will remember, and we will work together to fight against the brutal and criminal acts that sick minds think they can perpetrate on our communities without paying the price.

We hope justice will be rendered. But most of all, Freda Jones, we hope that you will have a peaceful going-home service, recognizing that the community loved you and will continue to show its love to your family and to your children.

□ 1430

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FRANKS of Arizona addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MURDER OF CUBAN FREEDOM SEEKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today once again to talk about one of the last hostile regimes on the planet, an island 90 miles to the south of my home State of Florida, Cuba.

For well over 40-plus years, Fidel Castro has time and time again shown his reprehensible disregard for the safety and welfare of his own people. His tyrannical regime has forced countless innocent people to risk their lives to

seek the shores of the United States. What is worse, these people go to the furthest of extremes, even placing other countrymen at risk in order to seek freedom.

On April 2, in another one of the countless stories of Cubans trying to seek refuge, a group of three men attempted to take over a ferry ship and force it to go to the United States. Though I am in no way supportive of hijacking or putting others at risk, it is clear from our history with this oppressive Nation that its people will do almost anything for just a taste of freedom.

The men were prosecuted on Tuesday, those three men, in summary trials for very grave acts of terrorism and given only a few days to appeal their sentences. This pathetic excuse for a judicial system never gave these men a chance. I must report to this body that, earlier today, these three men were executed.

Mr. Speaker, these actions were not that of terrorists but those of people seeking freedom. It is clear that these men never intended to harm anyone. All they wanted was a chance at what millions of Cubans have been thirsting for since Fidel Castro took control and took power, and that is freedom, a right we in this country enjoy and a right we are fighting for today in Iraq. Though these acts should have been punished, the penalty was extreme, barbarous, even by the most strict of standards.

I have fought on this floor against terrorism all my life, and I will not accept it in any form, but this execution today was clearly a message to the Cuban people that freedom is not an option.

To those colleagues of mine who have suggested over the past year-and-a-half that we open trade and opportunity with Fidel Castro, they need to look at this material and see that this man executed three people today. Would these same Members offer a peaceful resolution to Saddam Hussein who I consider equally heinous as Fidel Castro? Would they suggest going to do trade with Saddam? Let us look at what Fidel Castro is all about, and let us recognize what danger he puts his own people in.

We must continue what we do by upholding the sanctions and further limiting U.S. government involvement with this rogue Nation. The people of Cuba deserve a democracy. Their leader is a tyrant, a dictator and now, based on this evidence, a murderer. Many of us have known that. My colleagues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), have all been telling this body about the horrors of the oppression, of the silencing of people merely trying to get a democracy in place in that Nation.

Mr. Speaker, if anyone must be put in front of a firing squad it is Mr. Castro himself for these despicable acts.